

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 OMB-01 AID-05 SAB-01 SAM-01 NIC-01 SSC-01

/064 W

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R 020623Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2109

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, KU

SUBJECT: COMPETITION FOR THE SPEAKERSHIP OF THE NATIONAL  
ASSEMBLY - KUWAIT

REF: KUWAIT 0469

1. WITH THE ELECTION OF KUWAIT'S FOURTH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY COMPLETE, COMPETITION FOR THE POSITION OF SPEAKER OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY HAS BEGUN. THE LAST ASSEMBLY'S SPEAKER, KHALID AL-GHUNAYM AND DEPUTY SPEAKER, YUSIF AL-MUKHLID, WERE BOTH REELECTED AND WILL BE PRIME CANDIDATES. THE RULING FAMILY WOULD VERY MUCH LIKE TO SEE THESE POSITIONS REMAIN IN THE HANDS OF THE INCUMBENTS AND IS LOBBYING FOR THIS. HOWEVER, THIS IS UNLIKELY WITH THE MANY NEW FACES IN THE NEW ASSEMBLY AND THE LOSS OF MANY PRO-FAMILY STALWARTS.

2. THE KEY CONTENDERS ARE KHALID MAS'UD, JASIM AL-SAQR, JASIM AL-QITAMI AND ABD-AL-AZIZ AL-MASA'ID. ALL BUT SAQR ARE CONTROVERSIAL FIGURES AND ARE UNLIKELY TO OBTAIN THE REQUIRED MAJORITY. SAQR IS THE SCION OF ONE OF KUWAIT'S MOST IMPORTANT MERCHANT FAMILIES AND HAS THE SUPPORT OF THE POWERFUL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, HEADED BY HIS BROTHER, ABD-

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AL-AZIZ, WHO WAS THE ASSEMBLY'S FIRST SPEAKER.

3. AL-GHUNAYM IS KNOWN AS A WEAK INDIVIDUAL, WHO WAS BARELY ABLE TO CONTROL THE ASSEMBLY. THE NEWLY ELECTED LIBERALS WILL WANT TO SEE HIM OUT. IT APPEARS THAT SAQR IS CURRENTLY THE STRONGEST CANDIDATE, ALTHOUGH HE MAY NOT HAVE THE REQUIRED 26 VOTES. IF SAQR DOES NOT WIN, WE WILL SEE A COMPROMISE CANDIDATE NOT LISTED AMONG THE KEY CONTENDERS. THE FAMILY MAY, OF COURSE, OFFER SOME OF THE CANDIDATES MINISTERIAL POSITIONS IN ORDER TO ELIMINATE THEM, BUT GHUNAYM STILL PROBABLY WILL NOT BE REELECTED.

4. IF NONE OF THE CONTENDERS LISTED ABOVE ARE ABLE TO OBTAIN THE REQUIRED VOTES, JASIR AL-JASIR AND FAYSAL AL-DUWISH ARE LIKELY COMPROMISE CANDIDATES.  
STOLTZFUS

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